



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/528,580	03/21/2005	Tatsuhiko Aoki	041094-5026	8597
9629 7590 02/05/2010 MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP 1111 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW WASHINGTON, DC 20004				
EXAMINER				
ALMATRAHI, FARIS S				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3627				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
02/05/2010		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/528,580

Applicant(s)

AOKI ET AL.

Examiner

FARIS ALMATRAHI

Art Unit

3627

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/CD)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/21/2005, 10/10/2006
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Application

1. **Claims 1-24** are pending in this application.
2. If applicant is aware of any prior art or any co-pending application not already on record, the applicant is reminded of his/her duty under 37 C.F.R §1.56 to disclose the same.

Claim Objections

3. The claims are objected to because they include reference characters which are not enclosed within parentheses.

Reference characters corresponding to elements recited in the detailed description of the drawings and used in conjunction with the recitation of the same element or group of elements in the claims should be enclosed within parentheses so as to avoid confusion with other numbers or characters which may appear in the claims. See MPEP § 608.01(m).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. **Claims 1-24** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the conference subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
6. The claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors.
7. Although Applicants use "means for" in the claim(s) (**e.g. claim 82 recites "distribution status instruct means 103 for instructing the storage means 102 to store...."**), it is the Examiner's position that the "means for" phrase(s) do not invoke 35 U.S.C. 112 6th paragraph. If Applicants concur, the Examiner respectfully requests Applicants to either amend the claim(s) to remove all instances of "means for" from the claim(s), or to explicitly state on the record why 35 U.S.C. 112 6th paragraph should not be invoked.

Alternatively, if Applicants desire to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112 6th paragraph, the Examiner respectfully requests Applicants to expressly state their desire on the record. Upon receiving such express invocation of 35 U.S.C. 112 6th paragraph, the "means for" phrase(s) will be interpreted as set forth in the *Supplemental Examination Guidelines for Determining the Applicability of 35 USC 112 6th* (See Federal Register Vol. 65, No 120, June 21, 2000.)

8. Claim 17, is directed to a program for allowing a computer to operate as the cargo distribution management system but the body of the claim does not contain any limitations indicating the structure of the system. A system or an apparatus claim should

always claim the structure or the hardware that performs the function. Applicant's claimed limitations consist of a program (software per se) that do not describe the structure of the device. Appropriate correction is required. Similar comments apply to Claims 18 and 24.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. **Claims 1-24**, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Radican (US Patent No. 6,148,291).

11. Regarding claims 1-24, Radican shows a system for allowing a server computer to manage a cargo group, which is one of or both of a loaded cargo which is a pallet loaded with a cargo and the pallet unloaded with the cargo and contains into a container, and distributing the cargo group between distribution points including a consignor, a vaning center, a devanning center, and a consignee, wherein each of the distribution points comprises a terminal, the terminal comprising a distribution status transmission means for transmitting distribution status information including at least identification information for individually identifying the cargo group and position information on the distribution point, to the server computer and the server computer

comprises: a storage means that constitutes a database storing the identification information and the distribution status information (Abstract, Figure 2, Column 2 lines 45-67); a distribution status instruct means for instructing the storage means to store the received identification information and the distribution status information, and thereby instructing the storage means to update the distribution status information stored in the storage means (Abstract, Figures 2-7, Column 2 lines 45-67); and a distribution status output means for outputting a result obtained by processing the distribution status information stored in the storage means (Abstract, Figures 2-7, Column 2 lines 45-67); and a distribution period calculation means for calculating a distribution period of said cargo group between said distribution points, and wherein said distribution period calculation means obtains a distribution processing period for each predetermined distribution processing element, and calculates a sum of distribution processing periods as the distribution period (Abstract, Figures 2-7, Column 2 lines 45-67, Column 4 line 29 – Column 5 line 23).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Faris Almatrahi whose telephone number is (571) 270-3326. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ryan Zeender can be reached on (571) 272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Faris Almatrahi/
Examiner, Art Unit 3627

FA

/F. Ryan Zeender/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3627